

## **German Sub-Faculty Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Audit, November 2023**

### **Introduction**

This paper is meant to be read as the second update to the extensive September 2021 report by Joanna Neilly (thank you!). The focus in this update is on major changes made in teaching in the academic year 2022-23 as well as significant results from the latest audit.

There was a reasonable response rate to the audit: 12 respondents, of which 8 permanent postholders, 4 fixed-term/early career lecturers/researchers, and 0 Lektor\*innen. This is down from a total of 16 respondents last year. Thank you to everyone who filled out the audit!

This survey was designed to find out how we currently address diverse experiences and approaches in our teaching across three main areas: language, linguistics, and literature/culture. It was based on the survey conducted in September of 2021, but, to make it lighter-touch (like the last update), asked respondents to focus on changes they made since the last survey. In keeping with the Faculty approach and to align with other SFs, as advised by the Race and Diversity Champion Phillip Rothwell (currently covered by Kate Tunstall), the audit was framed in terms of the UK's protected characteristics (age; gender reassignment; disability; race including skin colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation; pregnancy and maternity; being married or in a civil partnership). Respondents were however also welcome to comment on other types of diversity, e.g. class. This is not just about representing authors/ filmmakers/ theorists etc. from underrepresented groups, although this is essential to a diverse curriculum, but also about critical approaches to teaching which encourage discussion of various perspectives, questions of power and oppression, etc.

### **Current Practice**

The major points emerging from this update are as follows:

- Responses show that colleagues continue to think about ways of diversifying their curricula. This ongoing assessment is especially noticeable in responses to a question about changing reading lists. It shows that we continue to pay attention particularly to including a variety of critical approaches by diverse sets of scholars.
- The responses show that across the Sub-Faculty we continue to pay a lot of attention to sex and gender, race, ethnic/national origin, sexual orientation, and religion and belief, including in texts by seemingly 'non-diverse' authors.
- Two topics which the audit suggests are underdeveloped in our offerings are disability as well as gender reassignment and trans and non-binary identities. Class, although not one of the protected characteristics in the UK but nevertheless called out specifically in the audit's questions, was mentioned only twice.

A selection of good examples from current practice from the audit:

- One respondent had their second-year students participate in Phillip Rothwell's Translation Diversity Project.
- Respondents have been introducing a variety of contemporary and/or non-canonical authors into their teaching whose texts address questions related to diversity. Examples include: Navid Kermani, Abbas Khider, Sama Maani, Ronya Othmann, Sharon Dodua Otoo, Mithu Sanyal, SchwarzRund, Linda Stift, Yoko Tawada, Olivia Wenzel, and Hengameh Yaghoobifarah.
- In Linguistics teaching, attention is paid to a broad range of topics related to diversity. Examples include discussions of Kiezdeutsch and the sociophonetics of gender identity.
- Translation, too, remains a great place for introducing diversity in both authors and textual subjects.
- One lecture series examined a diverse range of authors alongside canonical texts of the same period, making students actively reflect on the processes of canonization.

Changes that have come into effect since the last audit:

- After a review of Prelims Paper IV, the new course will go into effect in the next academic year (2024-5). This was put on hold for a year due to lecture capacity and uncertainty about the future of Paper III. In the first audit, Paper IV was identified as most pressing as it is the only literary/cultural studies paper taken by beginners.
- Last year's issue with old handbooks (2020-21) being available on the MML website for prospective students has now been resolved. These handbooks were missing the more recent EDI updates. No handbooks are now available on the MML website for prospective students.

### **Further Suggestions**

Further Suggestions from the German SF Audit:

- Respondents commented on Paper VIII and Paper X as in need of further attention:
  - o While considerable changes to Paper X have been in place since 2022-23, it was pointed out that the predominance of male authors on the Paper was still often commented on by students. Another respondent suggested that the Paper could be expanded to include contemporary writers (e.g. Emine Sevgi Özdamar) to further address this imbalance.
  - o As for Paper VIII, despite substantial changes in messaging around the Paper from the 2021-22 Handbook onward, it was pointed out that more could be done to signal to students the diversity present in the Paper as it seems to many students as structured around historical periods rather than topics. Another respondent asked for more (best) practices around the Paper to be shared.